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In reply refer to
P/HO

November 27, 1962

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Dock:

Your letter of August 27, 1962, to the President, in which you raised certain questions regarding Nazi war criminals, has been referred to the Department of State for reply.

Since the motion picture "Judgment at Nuremberg" was a fictional portrayal of war crimes trials, I cannot comment on it specifically. I can, however, give you some information on the two different sets of Nuremberg trials which may be useful to you.

The major German war criminals were tried before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg beginning on November 20, 1945. Judgment was rendered on September 30 and October 1, 1946. Twelve of the defendants were sentenced to be hanged, and ten of them were hanged: Joachim von Ribbentrop, Wilhelm Keitel, Alfred Jodl, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Alfred Rosenberg, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Fritz Sauckel, Julius Streicher, Hans Frank, and Wilhelm Frick. Of the other two, Hermann Goering committed suicide while awaiting execution, and Martin Bormann was tried in absentia and has never been found. Sentenced to life imprisonment were Rudolph Hess, who is still incarcerated in Spandau prison; Walter Funk, who was released from Spandau in failing health on May 17, 1957, and died on June 4, 1960; and Erich Raeder, who was released from Spandau in failing health on September 26, 1955, and died on November 6, 1960. Sentenced for twenty years were Baldur von Schirach and Albert Speer, both of whom are still in Spandau. Sentenced for fifteen years was Constantin von Neurath, who was released from Spandau in failing health on November 4, 1954, and died on August 14, 1956. Sentenced for ten years was Karl Dönitz, who was released from Spandau on October 1, 1956. Acquitted were Hjalmar Schacht, Franz von Papen, and Hans Fritzsche. Robert Ley, included in the indictment, died before he could be tried. Responsibility for the custody, care, execution of sentences, and clemency for these incarcerated criminals was shared by the four

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Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Dock,
7226 West Crain Street,
Niles 48, Illinois.

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powers occupying Germany--the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union. These four powers still exercise joint control over Spandau prison and the war criminals serving sentences there.

In addition to the international trials referred to above, there took place at Nuremberg a series of twelve trials in the years 1946 to 1949 of other German war criminals before military tribunals established by the United States alone. These are also often referred to as the "Nuremberg Trials", and it is my understanding that the motion picture "Judgment at Nuremberg" alluded to these trials, not to the proceedings before the International Military Tribunal, which was responsible for trying the major war criminals whose crimes had no particular geographical location. You will probably be interested in the section of the enclosed pamphlet, entitled Report on Germany, concerning war criminals, which commences on pages 94. You will note that on the authority of Executive Order No. 10144, effective June 6, 1949, a copy of which is enclosed, the High Commissioner undertook a review of the unexpired sentences imposed by the Military Tribunals created by Military Government Ordinance No. 7. An Advisory Board on Clemency for War Criminals, appointed by the United States High Commissioner, was established in March 1950 to consider disparities among sentences for comparable crimes and facts tending to indicate that any sentences imposed were excessive. The United States High Commissioner, on January 31, 1951, announced his decisions after receiving and studying the Advisory Board's report to him. Table III on page 103 of the enclosed Report lists the judgments and sentences of the Tribunal and their status, as well as the clemency actions which were taken. I am also enclosing a list of references on the Nuremberg trials.

You may find helpful the general discussion of the role played by the United States in Germany after World War II in The United States in Germany, 1944-1955, by Harold Zink. This book, if not in your local library, can presumably be obtained on interlibrary loan. The Department of State cannot, of course, assume responsibility for the accuracy of statements in unofficial publications.

Sincerely yours,

William M. Franklin
Director, Historical Office
Bureau of Public Affairs

Enclosures:

1. Report on Germany.
2. Executive Order No. 10144.
3. List of references.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 31 8:39 AM '62
OFFICE OF PUBLIC SERVICES
PC

August 27, 1962

Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Bock
7226 N. Crain
Niles 48, Illinois

President John F. Kennedy
White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

In the motion picture, "Judgement at Nuremburg", the closing words are, in substance,

> "Not one of the war criminals sentenced to life imprisonment is still serving his term today."

Mr. Richard Widmark enacting the role of prosecutor against the war criminals made an offhand remark during one of his scenes, "Just for laughs, what was the war all about?"

Mr. President, just for the sake of the dead soldiers in Arlington and elsewhere throughout the world, would you explain firstly, the mechanics of how these war criminals became freed before serving their sentences. Under whose authority were they freed and on what grounds, legal or moral?

Is it a foregone conclusion and inevitability that these men would regain their freedom; did the prosecuting judges know this to be true?

In view of the monstrous crimes against humanity participated in by all Nazi members, how do you feel personally about the above events? Do you not feel America's responsibility to the world as well as Russia's to keep these men out of society forever?

Has the United States fulfilled its agreements to de-nazify Germany. Are there any former Nazis who held important posts under Hitler now holding powerful positions, civil, military or political in Western Germany today?

I hope to hear from you at your earliest opportunity.

Respectfully yours,
Sydney Bock
Lynn Locke
Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Bock

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